1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

more speakers of other dialects began to make an effort to learn the new national language or kuo-yü.

During the years of China's war of resistance against Japan when people speaking various dialects were squeezed into the hinterland, dialectal barriers were gradually broken down. A situation like that proved to be favorable to the further popularization of the national language. Although it may be exaggeration to say that now the national language has replaced local dialects in the Central-South Region, it is nevertheless true that kuo-yü is gaining wider acceptance than ever before.

VI. THE CHINESE WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Despite the fact that the Chinese people in this region speak different Chinese dialects and even non-Chinese languages, the fact still remains that they use one and the same system of writing. None of the non-Chinese languages spoken in the Central-South Region has a written language of its own. As Chinese is the second language of these non-Chinese speaking peoples, they write in Chinese as well.

China's written language consists of thousands of uniformly understood logographs or "characters" as they are commonly called. They can be understood only with reference to their ancient forms.

A. Pictographs

Chinese characters are traditionally classified into six main categories, the first of which is pictographs. The characters in this category all originated from simple pictures: jih, now written 日, is

the character for "the sun," yüeh 月, now written 月, is the character for "the moon," etc. However, they have long lost their function of picturing things and become merely conventionalize visual symbols of spoken words. 212

B. Ideographs

The second category is that of the ideographs. which are characters indicating in a diagrammatic manner simple ideas, as shang 上 for "up, above", hsia 下 for "down, below", i 一 for "one", erh 二 for "two", san 三 for "three", etc. Pictographs and ideographs, presumably bases of ancient Chinese characters, however, amount to only one-tenth of the entire stock of China's written symbols.

C. Compound Ideographs

The third category is that of the compound ideographs or characters whose meanings are determined by the combined meanings of their component parts, as ming 明, which is a combination of the "sun" and "moon", stands for "bright"; hsin 信, which is a combination of "man" and "word", hence, the "words of a man" stands for "honesty."

D. Phonetic Loan Characters

The fourth cetegory is that of phonetic loan characters. These characters were all borrowed from existing words homophonous with the new ones for which written symbols had to be coined. For example, when a written symbol had to be created for the new word lai, meaning "to come", instead of resorting to

pictographic or ideographic devices for the coining of such a symbol, the old character 來, meaning "barley", also similarly pronounced, was borrowed for that purpose. Often such a borrowed character displaced the original source. Thus, 來 is now used exclusively to mean "to come" rather than "barley". Similarly, ch'i 其, the third personal pronoun, is now used invariably as such rather than as a symbol for "basket", the meaning of the original word similarly written and similarly pronounced.

E. Phonetic Compounds

Phonetic compounds constitute the fifth and perhaps the most numerous category of Chinese characters. They consist of two portions, a "signific" or meaning portion, and a "phonetic" or pronunciation portion. The former reveals the general meaning while the latter indicates the pronunciation of the compound. Thus, jan 燃 "to burn" has huo 火 "fire" as its signific, and jan 然 "so, thus" as its phonetic. Similarly, t'ang 糖 "sugar" has mi 米 "rice, cereal" as its signific, and t'ang 唐 "bold talk" as its phonetic. It may be pointed out here that the phonetic element of such compounds may or may not have been a "phonetic loan compound", that the pronunciation of the phonetic may or may not be exactly identical with that of the compound even on the basis of ancient Chinese pronunciation, and that the meaning indicated by the signific at best is categorical rather than minutely accurate.

F. Derivative Characters

The last of the six categories consists of what may be called derivative characters, the origin of which is

still uncertain. Some scholars think that the characters of the category resulted from graphic inversion, such as lao 老 "aged, old" and k'ao 考 "aged, old";[1] others think that they resulted from changes brought about by modifications in sounds accompanied by modifications in meanings, such as heng 亨 "propitious" and hsiang 享 "to enjoy". At any rate, this is the smallest category.

VII. CHINESE SCRIPT AND THE HIGH INCIDENCE OF ILLITERACY

It is true that written Chinese is uniformly understood throughout the country and has created no difficulty for literate Chinese in communicating ideas to one another regardless of their dialectal affiliation. But it is also true that although Chinese characters might have been devised for writing the spoken language in ancient times, now the great majority of symbols have become merely conventionalized written equivalents of individual spoken words. Some of the characters for most commonly used words such as 鹽 "salt" and 鐵 "iron", for instance, consist of twenty-four and twenty-one strokes respectively. To say the very least about them, they are time-consuming for the average Chinese to learn and memorize. As there are thousands of characters in everyday use, many of which are comparable in complexity and clumsiness, it should be apparent that it will take an average person many years to become adequately literate. It is entirely possible and highly probable that there is a definite connection between the complicated and clumsy Chinese script and the high incidence of illiteracy in China, although other equally convincing factors, too, must have contributed substantially to that fact.

[1] [errata should be "to examine." -Analyst]

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

VIII. LITERARY CHINESE

212
195

Besides the many different dialects, many of which have their own written counterparts of varying degrees of completeness, there is yet another language in China known as the literary language, as it is usually called by Western writers. It is the language of China's undying classics and owes its preservation to the inflexible and conservative system of writing of the country. As such, it has no standard pronunciation of its own. In other words, it has as many standards of pronunciation as there are dialects in China. That is to say that if a passage written in wenli is read by a speaker of Northern or Southwestern Mandarin, Kan-Hakka, Cantonese or Southern Min, it will sound like the dialect he speaks. Moreover, in grammar and syntax, literary Chinese is so different from any of the dialects that it is almost a different language, entirely free from the influences of the changes that have taken place in the dialects. Hence, it is possible for a lettered Chinese at the same time to speak his own dialect and write literary Chinese without any strange feeling on his part at all. As a language, literary Chinese is noted for its conciseness, frequently leaving out many things which are ordinarily expressed, thus creating a kind of ambiguous terseness all its own, requiring its readers to fill in the missing elements as they go along. This characteristic accounts for the reason why a passage written in literary Chinese, when read aloud, can seldom be fully understood by a listener even though he may speak the dialect of the person reading.

Despite such a shortcoming, literary Chinese has been exerting a tenacious influence on the Chinese, especially the lettered segment of the population. It

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

is literary Chinese that has kept China's classics alive and perpetuated the many pithy dicta of wisdom unsurpassed in the living language of the Chinese people despite dialectal barriers of any kind. Although the written national language has been gaining wider and wider acceptance, the great majority of government and commercial organizations are still using literary Chinese in the transactions of their routine business.

IX. LANGUAGE REFORMS

Attempts to introduce language reforms in China began on a nationwide basis with the movement to unify the national language shortly after the establishment of the Chinese Republic in 1911. The movement was followed closely by efforts to reform the written language. Those who advocated such reforms were of the opinion that since the characters were so complicated and time-consuming for the average person to learn, and since literary Chinese was so unrealistic and impractical, something had to be done to make the written language of China more effective, so that it could be within the grasp of the average Chinese citizen in a relatively short period of time.

A. Phonetic Symbols

One type of reform advocated the use of phonetic symbols as an aid to the illiterate to learn to read. However, since the sole function of these symbols is phonetic, they are effective when they are used as a guide to correct pronunciation in accordance with the standard of the national language for the purpose of leveling down dialectal differences in pronunciation. They are helpful only to those who have not yet acquired such a knowledge. They cannot possibly add

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

anything to the attempt to make the Chinese language system simpler or more readily accessible to the illiterate masses. 198 185

B. Alphabetization

Another type of reform advocated was the alphabetization of Chinese in order to get away from ideographic writing. As a matter of fact, the use of the Roman alphabet for the transcription of sounds of the Chinese language is no novel suggestion. As early as the beginning of the sixteenth century, Matteo Ricci, a Jesuit missionary to China, began to transcribe the then Mandarin sounds with the Roman alphabet on the basis of the speech sounds of his own native Italian language. Later, other systems of romanization were devised by others to meet the needs of those speaking other Western languages. The most widely used system among English-speaking peoples is the so-called Wade-Giles system, originally devised by Sir Thomas Wade, a member of the British legation in China, and later revised by the British sinologist, Herbert A. Giles. Another system in current use in this country is devised by the linguists at Yale University and is known as the Yale System. 212 185

In 1928 the Chinese Ministry of Education adopted a system of romanization known as Gwoyeu Romatzyh or National Language Romanization, devised by a group of Chinese linguists and intellectual leaders such as Dr. Yuen Ren Chao, Dr. Lin Yutang, and others. Its distinguishing feature is that instead of indicating Chinese intonation by means of superior figures or diacritical marks, it spells the different tones of Chinese words with different letters: mai (second tone, Wade-Giles mai 2) "to bury"; mae (third tone,

Wade-Giles mai 3) "to buy"; may (fourth tone, Wade-Giles mai 4) "to sell". 212 185

Between 1929 and 1931 another system of romanization known as Latinxua was devised mainly by Professor A. A. Dragunov, a linguist of Leningrad, primarily for teaching the Chinese workers in the USSR to read. It has been very popular, for obvious reasons, with the Chinese Communists, who have been doing all they can to promote and popularize it. However, since the system makes no attempt, except in an ad hoc manner, to distinguish tones in Chinese, it is not only inadequate and unsatisfactory, but often misleading.

C. Simplified Characters

Yet another type of proposal advocated the simplification of Chinese characters, especially the more complicated ones in common use, by reducing the number of their strokes. Advocates of this proposal believed that a simplified system of writing would make the whole process of learning to read and write Chinese much easier and less time-consuming. For example, ts'ai "then" has been reduced to look like 才, and t'ieh "iron", to look like 铁. If a satisfactory principle of simplification that is philologically sound can be worked out, so that the simplified characters, if necessary, can be identified with the original characters, the adoption of such a system may turn out to be a boon to China's millions of illiterate people in their effort to become literate.

D. Basic Chinese

A fourth type of proposal advocated the reduction of the number of characters to be meant for general

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

212
85

use in order to simplify the written language. For example, the series of textbooks for teaching the illiterate compiled by Dr. Yen Yang-ch'u, leader of the Mass Education Movement, who is better known abroad as James Y. C. Yen, represents an effort made in this direction. On the basis of some 1,200 characters chosen by him in terms of their frequency, he compiled texts that he believed would enable China's illiterate people to meet their basic needs in expression. As another effort made more or less in the same direction, we may mention the list of characters chosen by Hung Shen, the famous dramatist. In 1935 he published his Method of Teaching and Using 1,100 Basic Chinese Characters. Instead of basing his choice of characters on frequency and limiting their usefulness and expressiveness to a rudimentary plane, he chose them on the criteria of their flexibility in forming compounds with other characters and their adequacy for general use in everyday situations.

X. DEVELOPMENTS UNDER THE COMMUNISTS

The Chinese Communists have been cautious in their efforts to reform the Chinese language. They frequently quote Stalin who said that the language of a people cannot be artifically changed and that the evolution of any language has to follow a natural course.[1]

1. See quotation and discussion in Ts'ao Po-han, "Yu-wen Wen-t'i P'ing-lun Chi [Critical Essays on the Language Problem], Shanghai, Tung-fang shu-tien, 1954, p. 95.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

However, to combat illiteracy the Communists also see the immediate need of simplifying the Chinese written language. In this regard the government policy is based on Mao Tse-tung's statement in his On New Democracy that, "under certain conditions, the written language of China must be reformed." [2] Envisaged as an ultimate goal of language reform is the complete Latinization of the Chinese written language. In other words, the characters will be replaced by the Latin alphabet. Communist promoters of Latinization often cite Lenin's pronouncement that "Latinization is the great revolution of the East," [3] to substantiate their argument.

The Communists are trying to cultivate a politically conscious proletariat in China; China's spoken language, as reflected in songs, plays, and speeches, is becoming more proletarian and drifting away from the set phrases and expressions traditionally used by the intellectual class. Extensive use of professional jargon and local expressions is the vogue of the day. Political terms and scientific terms, particularly those of Russian origin, are apparently on the lips of every Chinese who has had Communist indoctrination. It must be noted that the Communists, in adopting many new terms heretofore unfamiliar to the average Chinese, are aware of the danger of corrupting their language. The People's Daily of Peking (the Pravda of China), in an editorial on June 6, 1951, urged the

2. Mao Tse-tung, Mao Tse-tung Hsüan-chi, [Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung], Vol. II, Peking, Jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1952, p. 680.

3. John de Francis, Nationalism and Language Reform in China, Princeton University Press, 1950, p. 90.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

use of correct Chinese and stressed the need for the study of grammar so that "the Chinese language will not become corrupt and impure."[4]

In the movement to eradicate illiteracy, the current trend is to promote accelerated methods of language teaching and to standardize and formalize many simplified characters already used by the people in handwriting. The Peking government, however, is applying little effort to the popularization of Latinized Chinese. One of the most publicized methods to accelerate language learning was introduced in 1948 by Ch'i Chien-hua, a cultural cadre attached to the armed forces. Ch'i champions the use of the "National Phonetic Symbols" (not to be confused with the Gwoyeu Romatzyh discussed in foregoing sections of this chapter) as the "walking stick" for new learners. The phonetic symbols are employed as an aid to pronunciation. This method was said to be so successful that the Peking government in May 1952 recognized Ch'i's contribution by inviting him to the capital and awarding him a citation.[5]

Simplification of written characters has received official blessing. When the Committee on the Study of Language Reform under the Ministry of Education compiled 798 such simplified characters and recommended that they be adopted, the recommendation was given immediate attention. On May 1, 1955, the committee announced that 57 of the simplified characters would be adopted by six national periodicals for experimental purposes.[6] On October 15, 1955, an All-China Conference on Language Reform was

4. Quoted in Jen-min Chiao-yu [People's Education], (Monthly), Peking, March 1955, p. 28.

5. [People's Education], May 1952, p. 4.

6. Hua-ch'iao Jih-pao [China Daily News], New York, May 2, 1955, p. 1.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

called by the committee to revise and enlarge the proposed list of simplified characters. 212/185

The Latinization movement, although without much official promotion, is by no means dead. There are publications printed in this new form of Chinese. One ardent supporter of this movement, Ni Hai-shu, claimed that in 1949 there were over 300 such publications, with a total circulation of about 500,000, already on the market.[7] In December 1951, there were evidences to show that active support for this movement was discernible in Central-South China.[8]

There are other recent developments in language reform. One is the attempt to standardize the use of punctuation. On October 5, 1951 the Government Administration Council in Peking issued a directive on the correct use of punctuation marks.[9] Since that time the general trend has been moving toward standardization. It has also been advocated that Chinese be written horizontally and from left to right. Such a practice is not new, but the Peking government is the first Chinese regime to sanction it. Following lengthy discussions on such a practice, national publications like the Englightenment Daily and New China Monthly, since January 1, 1955, have been printing their texts horizontally.

As to the languages of minority nationality groups, the over-all Communist policy is to help them create

8. Hsin-wentzu Pan-yüeh-k'an [New Language Semimonthly] , Shanghai, Dec. 16, 1951, p. 28; Jan. 16, 1952, p. 20.

9. Jen-min Shou-ts'e, 1952 [People's Handbook, 1952] , Shanghai, Ta-kung pao, 1952, p. 437.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

their own written scripts. The theory is that these people must first be given their own languages; then it will be easier for them to learn Chinese (Latinized Chinese, most probably). In Central-South China, a script is being developed for the Chuang Minority Nationals in Kwangsi Province.[10] These newly created scripts are based on the Latin alphabet.

XI. SPEAKERS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Before 1949, the use of foreign languages, mainly English, was found in a few large port cities in Central-South China such as Canton and Hankow. Contact with English-speaking people in such cities and inclusion of English in school curricula accounted for the popularity of English. However, with the exception of a few foreign missionary schools in which English was emphasized and taught by native speakers, instruction in English in other schools did not amount to much. This was true even of the colleges of the region. Although some college students could read a publication in English with reasonable ease, they could hardly converse in it. On the average, it may be safely assumed that no more than one-tenth of the secondary school graduates and no more than one-third of the college graduates could, with some difficulty, read English. The over-all percentages of those who could speak it would be even smaller.

The Communist policy is to discourage the use of English or any other Western language except for advanced specialized studies. But as late as 1953,[11]

10. Survey of China Mainland Press, No. 1068, Hong Kong, American Consulate-General, June 14, 1955, p. 1.

11. I-chiu-wu-ssu-nien T'ou-k'ao Ta-hsüeh Chih-tao, Guide to Taking College Entrance Examinations in 1954, Hong Kong, Hsueh-sheng shu-tien, 1954, pp. 98-100.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

in October 1949 as one of the six tasks set for the Chinese people, has achieved little. Although the heroes and the heroines depicted may be members of minority peoples, the books are written in Chinese by Han Chinese or by people of minority nationalities who have mastered the Chinese language. 538 563

So far, the effort to foster literature of minority nationalities has taken three forms: (1) tracing and recording minority customs; (2) interpreting social systems in minority groups from the dialectic materialistic viewpoint; and (3) the exchange of minority literature and Han Chinese literatures. Until the minority nationalities have their own written languages, this exchange amounts to the Sinicization of the minority nationalities through Chinese literature in ways which are not intended to seem "imperialistic" to the minority peoples. On the other hand, the cultural heritage of the Chinese people may be enriched by acquaintance with the literature of minority cultures.

Although the past is often interpreted by the Chinese Communists as a struggle between groups or suppression of one group by another, the literature of minority nationalities which is to be developed is not to be allowed to suggest animosities against the Chinese.

Steps have been taken by the Chinese Communists to create written languages for the Yao and Chuang peoples in the Central-South Region as well as for other ethnic groups in Southwest China. Whether these peoples, who have hitherto depended mainly on oral 212 563

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

transmission of their tradition, may begin to use a written language is not certain; but there is no doubt that the opportunity for propaganda and regimentation of thought increases with literacy. 21, 56

E. Poetry

Although Mao Tse-tung himself composes poems in the classical style, the "new poetry," which is written in pai-hua, (the vernacular), is in vogue in the Central-South Region today. 53

Wen I-to, Kuo Mo-jo, and Hsü Chih-mo, who wrote pai-hua, still are talked of. The publication of Wen's collected poems, Still Water, was an important literary event in 1929. Hsü experimented with new forms, including those found in Western poetry. He was less concerned with the theory and art of versification than Wen was. Wen's book, The Forms and Rules of Poetry (1926), which lists musical, artistic, and architectural skills as the necessary elements of good poetry, is a unique contribution to pai-hua poetry.

Kuo Mo-jo's poetry has energy and imagination, but no discipline and restraint; and has been likened to a torrent of water rushing from a broken dam. In the 1920's, when Kuo was the leader of the Creative Society, he advocated "art for art's sake." He was the first to introduce untranslated Western words and phrases into pai-hua poetry to enhance the beauty of of the metrical patterns of the stanzas. Although Kuo is not productive nowadays, and his poems are no longer popular, his present prestige as a "literary personage" is based on his past achievement; and his

2:Shryock H-4, 5 (no date)1931 AF14 Central China AF14

or devoured by small boys. In the home a lamp may be lit each evening before the tablets.

Ancestral temples are usually found in the country at the family nest, where all the neighbors may be relatives and bear the same surname. There are, however, eight such temples in the city of Anking. They are oblong enclosures, as indeed nearly all Chinese temples are, about one hundred feet long by forty wide, and in the country are usually surrounded by evergreens except in front. The roofs are not curved. They contain three halls directly behind each other, separated by open courts in which trees are planted on either side. First comes the entrance hall, where coffins are often stored, then a room used as a school for the children of the clan or at other times as a meeting place, and lastly the hall of the ancestors. The main doors are not ordinarily open and entrance is made through a side door into the first court. On these main doors are often painted two mythological worthies who act as spiritual doorkeepers. When a man has obtained high rank in the public examinations, a pole something like a Chi Kan is erected before his family temple.

Against the back wall of the hall of the ancestors, which is also the rear of the temple, are arranged a series of shelves like rising steps, and on these are the tablets, called Shen Chu, one generation to a shelf, with the founder of the family in the middle of the highest level. The tablets are made of wood and are approximately a foot high and eight inches wide. On them is written the name of the man, his wife and male children, and the characters Shih Wei, meaning his seat or place. These two words are also found on the tablets of gods and great men. Before the tablets is a table or altar, usually of carved wood, on which are five sacrificial vessels, usually of bronze. The central vessel is for incense, the others are pairs, two vases next the incense burner, and two candlesticks on the outside. I have been told the vases are for herbs but I have never seen them there. These five vessels are found on the altar of every Chinese temple, whether Confucian, Buddhist or Taoist.

Every Chinese has in addition to his surname, which is in most cases